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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**Hero for a Day: Community Unites to Give Back to the Youth**

**Aroma Park, IL** – You don't have to wear a cape to be considered a hero. This was the reminder to several kids and parents who were in for a treat at "Hero for a Day," brought to the community by Garden of Prayer, Unity Partnership and the Kankakee Police Department.

Youth from Garden of Prayer showed off their skills to parents and guests on stage, including singing, dancing and skits. The event was held as a fundraiser to give back. After the presentation, kids of all ages received a new pair of shoes donated by Unity Partnership and Super Heroic.

"It's a great opportunity to showcase all of the great things the kids have done over the summer. We engage them academically, spiritually, and recreationally. I think it's awesome to bridge the gap between the police and the community. I'm sure the kids will look forward to wearing their new shoes back to school," said Summer Director of Garden of Prayer, Alex Graves.

The shoes were distributed by the Kankakee Police Department. This was in part a big thanks to Jason Mayden from Super Heroic, who is also a former shoe designer for Nike.

"It always feels good helping people in the community, especially young people. I hope that the relationship with the community continues to grow and prosper. For tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today," said Deputy Chief Willie Hunt.

"I'm very excited and pleased that the Kankakee Police Department and Unity Partnership are implementing this in our community. It fosters a bond so that everyone can be involved in keeping our community safe. It starts at a young age," said Executive Director of Garden of Prayer, Michael Maloney.

Unity Partnership hosts "Hero for a Day" events to continue to build relationships with other local organizations across the Chicago-land area. Their goal is to rebuild the trust between police and the youth and to encourage youth from diverse cultures and backgrounds that they too, can be a hero.

"It builds trust and relationships that we can look forward to in the future. We want to remind kids that no matter what you face, no matter where you live, or the disadvantages you may encounter, you can still be a hero yourself," said President and Founder of Unity Partnership, Regina Brent.

Thirty-five hundred pairs of shoes will be donated to kids across the Chicago-land area for back to school. Kankakee's police chief, Frank Kosman, has worked with Unity Partnership before and was excited to have them partner with Garden of Prayer and the City of Kankakee.

"I would like to thank Regina Brent of the Unity Partnership for helping the Kankakee Police Department bring the Shoes for Super Heroes giveaway to the children at the Garden of Prayer facility. It was great to talk to the children about how they can partner with the police to be super heroes. It was also nice to see their excitement in receiving the shoes and capes provided through generous donations. We hope to bring more events to build more trust and a positive relationship between the police and our community," said chief Frank Kosman.

Unity Partnership would like to thank Garden of Prayer and the Kankakee Police Department and administration for their support and participation. They would also like to thank their sponsors John Burgess, CEO of International Service Inc., and Matt LaFond from the Cantigny Park Foundation, as well as, Stratford Square Mall.

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The City of Kankakee is dedicated to protecting, building and nurturing the community while enhancing lives. We are a historic, vibrant, and active riverfront community. We continue to transform into an extraordinary place to dream, grow, and thrive. Embracing our diversity, we strive to be progressive, inclusive, and innovative. For more information on the City of Kankakee, please visit the website at [www.citykankakee-il.gov](http://www.citykankakee-il.gov).